

✓ **A Rectitude of Conduct** ✗ **A Holiness and Chastity** ✓  
✓ **An Interracial Fellowship**

“*—these are the weapons which the American believers can and must wield in their double crusade,”*”

The perfection of such weapons, the wise and effective utilization of every one of them, more than

- ✗ the furtherance of any particular plan, or
- ✗ the devising of any special scheme, or
- ✗ the accumulation of any amount of material resources,

can prepare them for the time when the Hand of Destiny will have directed them to assist in creating and in bringing into operation that World Order which is now incubating within the worldwide administrative institutions of their Faith.

*A Message from Barbara Talley* ADVENT OF DIVINE JUSTICE  
SHOGHI EFFENDI

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*Of these spiritual prerequisites of success, which constitute the bedrock on which the security of all **teaching plans**, **Temple projects**, and **financial schemes**, must ultimately rest, the following stand out as preeminent and vital, which the members of the American Bahá'í community will do well to ponder.*

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**Upon the extent to which these basic requirements are met, and the manner in which the American believers fulfill them in their**

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1. ***individual lives,***
2. ***administrative activities, and***
3. ***social relationships,***

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**must depend the measure of the manifold blessings which the All-Bountiful Possessor can vouchsafe to them all.**

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## ***These requirements are none other than a***

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- ***high sense of moral rectitude in their social and administrative activities,***

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- ***absolute chastity in their individual lives, and***

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- ***complete freedom from prejudice in their dealings with peoples of a different race, class, creed, or color.***

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1. **The first is specially, though not exclusively, directed to their**

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**elected representatives**, whether local, regional, or national, who,

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in their capacity as the custodians and members of the nascent

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institutions of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, are shouldering the chief

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responsibility in laying an unassailable foundation for that Universal

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House of Justice which, as its title implies, is to be the exponent and

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guardian of that Divine Justice which can alone insure the security

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of, and establish the reign of law and order in, a strangely

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disordered world.

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2. **The second is mainly and directly concerned with the Bahá'í youth,**

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who can contribute so decisively to the virility, the purity, and the

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driving force of the life of the Bahá'í community, and upon whom

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must depend the future orientation of its destiny, and the complete

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unfoldment of the potentialities with which God has endowed it.

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3. **The third should be the immediate, the universal, and the chief**

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**concern of all and sundry members of the Bahá'í community**, of

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whatever age, rank, experience, class, or color, as all, **with no**

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**exception**, must face its challenging implications, and **none can**

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**claim, however much he may have progressed along this line, to**

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**have completely discharged the stern responsibilities which it**

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**inculcates.**

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45 ***A rectitude of conduct, an abiding sense of undeviating justice,***  
46 unobscured by the demoralizing influences which a corruption-ridden  
47 political life so strikingly manifests;

48 ***a chaste, pure, and holy life,*** unsullied and unclouded by

- 49 • the ***indecencies,***
- 50 • the ***vices,***
- 51 • the ***false standards,*** which an inherently deficient moral code
  - 52 ○ ***tolerates,***
  - 53 ○ ***perpetuates,*** and
  - 54 ○ ***fosters;***
- 55 • ***a fraternity freed from that cancerous growth of racial prejudice,***  
56 which is eating into the vitals of an already debilitated society—

57 these are the ideals which the American believers must, from now on,  
58 individually and through concerted action, strive to promote, in both  
59 their private and public lives, ideals which are the chief propelling  
60 forces that can most effectively accelerate the march of their  
61 institutions, plans, and enterprises, that can guard the honor and  
62 integrity of their Faith, and subdue any obstacles that may confront it in  
63 the future.

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65 **Dearly beloved friends!**

66 ***A rectitude of conduct*** which, in all its manifestations, offers a striking  
67 contrast to the deceitfulness and corruption that characterize the  
68 political life of the nation and of the parties and factions that compose it;

69 ***a holiness and chastity*** that are diametrically opposed to the moral laxity  
70 and licentiousness which defile the character of a not inconsiderable  
71 proportion of its citizens;

72 ***an interracial fellowship*** completely purged from the curse of racial  
73 prejudice which stigmatizes the vast majority of its people –

74 **these are the weapons** which the American believers **can** and **must** wield  
75 **in their double crusade,**

- 76 • ***first*** to regenerate the inward life of their own community, and

77 • **next** to assail the long-standing evils that have entrenched  
78 themselves in the life of their nation.

79 The perfection of such weapons, the wise and effective utilization of  
80 every one of them,

- 81 • *more than the furtherance of any particular plan,*
- 82 • *or the devising of any special scheme,*
- 83 • *or the accumulation of any amount of material resources,*

84 can prepare them for the time when the Hand of Destiny will have  
85 directed them to **assist in creating and in bringing into operation that**  
86 **World Order** which is now incubating within the worldwide  
87 administrative institutions of their Faith.

88 In the conduct of this twofold crusade *the valiant warriors struggling in*  
89 *the name and for the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh must, of necessity, encounter*  
90 *stiff resistance, and suffer many a setback.*

91 Their own instincts, no less than

- 92 1. the *fury* of conservative forces,
- 93 2. the *opposition* of vested interests, and
- 94 3. the *objections* of a corrupt and pleasure-seeking generation must
  - 95 • *be reckoned with,*
  - 96 • *resolutely resisted,* and
  - 97 • *completely overcome.*

98 As their defensive measures for the impending struggle are organized  
99 and extended,

- 100 • *storms of abuse and ridicule,* and
- 101 • *campaigns of condemnation and misrepresentation,* may be  
102 unloosed against them.

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- 104 1. Their *Faith*, they may soon find, has been *assaulted,*
- 105 2. their *motives* misconstrued, their aims *defamed,*
- 106 3. their *aspirations* *derided,*
- 107 4. their *institutions* *scorned,*
- 108 5. their *influence* *belittled,*

- 109 6. their *authority undermined*, and  
110 7. their *Cause*, at times, *deserted* by a few who will either be  
111 a. *incapable* of appreciating the nature of their ideals, or  
112 b. *unwilling* to bear the brunt of the mounting criticisms which  
113 such a contest is sure to involve.

114 "*Because of 'Abdu'l-Bahá,*" *the beloved Master has prophesied, "many a*  
115 *test will be visited upon you. Troubles will befall you, and suffering afflict*  
116 *you."*

117 (Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 41)

118 Let not, however, the invincible army of Bahá'u'lláh, **who in the West,**  
119 **and at one of its potential storm centers is to fight,** in His name and for  
120 His sake, one of its fiercest and most glorious battles, **be afraid of any**  
121 **criticism** that might be directed against it.

- 122 • *Let it not be deterred* by any condemnation with which the tongue  
123 of the slanderer may seek to debase its motives.  
124 • *Let it not recoil* before the threatening advance of the forces  
125 ○ of *fanaticism*,  
126 ○ of *orthodoxy*,  
127 ○ of *corruption*, and  
128 ○ of *prejudice* that may be leagued against it.

129 The *voice of criticism* is a voice that indirectly *reinforces the proclamation*  
130 *of its Cause*.

131 *Unpopularity* but *serves to throw into greater relief the contrast* between  
132 it and its adversaries,

133 while *ostracism is itself the magnetic power that must eventually win*  
134 over to its camp the most vociferous and inveterate amongst its foes.

135 Already in the land where the greatest battles of the Faith have been  
136 fought, and its most rapacious enemies have lived,

- 137 • the *march* of *events*,  
138 • the slow yet steady *infiltration* of its *ideals*, and  
139 • the *fulfillment* of its *prophecies*,

140 have resulted not only

- 141       • in *disarming* and  
142       • in *transforming* the character of some of its most redoubtable  
143       enemies, but also  
144       • in *securing* their firm and unreserved allegiance to its Founders.

145       *So complete a transformation,*  
146       *so startling a reversal of attitude,*

147       can only be effected if that chosen vehicle which is designed to carry the  
148       Message of Bahá'u'lláh to

- 149       • the *hungry*,  
150       • the *restless*, and  
151       • *unshepherded*

152       multitudes is itself thoroughly cleansed from the defilements which it  
153       seeks to remove.

154       It is upon you, therefore, my best-beloved friends, that I wish to impress  
155       not only

- 156       • the *urgency* and  
157       • imperative *necessity* of your holy task, but also  
158       • the *limitless possibilities* which it possesses of raising to such an  
159       exalted level not only the life and activities of your own  
160       community, but  
161       • the *motives* and *standards* that govern the relationships existing  
162       among the people to which you belong.

163       Undismayed by the formidable nature of this task, you will, I am  
164       confident, meet as befits you the challenge of these times,

- 165       • *so fraught with peril*,  
166       • *so full of corruption*, and yet  
167       • *so pregnant with the promise of a future so bright that no previous*  
168       *age in the annals of mankind can rival its glory.*

169       (Shoghi Effendi, The Advent of Divine Justice, p. 42)

170       Annotated and formatted for study by Barbara Talley for Foundation Hall. This is an excerpt  
171       from the Advent of Divine Justice.